

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-12 ADP-00 OIC-04 ACDA-19 AEC-11 OMB-01

SAJ-01 CIAE-00 PM-09 INR-09 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01 USIA-12 MBFR-03 H-02 NSC-10

SS-14 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /153 W
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R 261500 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7467

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERN 1221

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SZ

SUBJECT: SITE OF SECOND STAGE OF CONFERENCE

REF: BERN 3687; HELSINKI 0753

1. THIS EMBASSY AGREES THAT ONE OF REASONS FOR SWISS ACTIVISM IN MPT, INCLUDING INTEREST IN SERVING AS HOST FOR SECOND STAGE, CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO SWISS FOREIGN MINISTER PIERRE GRABER'S PERSONAL INTEREST IN MORE ACTIVE INTERNATIONAL ROLE FOR SWITZERLAND. SINCE ASSUMING FONMIN PORTFOLIO, FEDERAL COUNSELOR GRABER HAS PROJECTED IMAGE OF AN ACTIVIST PRESSING FOR GREATER SWISS INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS INCLUDING MEMBERSHIP IN, OR AT LEAST ASSOCIATION WITH, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THUS, HE HAS PUBLICLY ADVOCATED SWISS MEMBERSHIP IN UNITED NATIONS.

2. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT GRABER' OWN ACTIVISM REFLECTS CURRENT TREND IN SWISS GOVERNMENT CIRCLES GENERALLY. SWISS HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY AWARE
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OF THEIR DEPENDENCE ON OUTSIDE WORLD. THEY ARE VERY MUCH CONCERNED LEST THEIR TRADITIONAL POLICIES OF ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY, PERMANENT NEUTRALITY, AND REJECTION OF "ENTANGLING ALLIANCES" ISOLATE THEM FROM WORLD POLITICAL SCENE AND DEPRIVE THEM OF INFLUENCE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN WHICH THEY HAVE VITAL INTEREST. GRABER'S VIEWS ARE SHARED WIDELY BY CAREER DIPLOMATS IN HIS OWN DEPARTMENT AND BY SENIOR OFFICIALS OF SWISS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL. THE URGE TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IS PARTICULARLY STRONG IN DYNAMIC, AMBITIOUS YOUNGER SWISS DIPLOMATS OF WHOM EDOUARD BRUNNER IS PRIME EXAMPLE.

3. SWISS INTEREST IN HOSTING SECOND STAGE OF CSCE, HOWEVER, IS BASED ALSO ON OTHER CONSIDERATIONS. IN BERN 3687 OF DECEMBER 21, 1972, REPORTING ON SWISS ASSESSMENT OF MPT I, WE CITED BRUNNER AS EXPRESSING SWISS UNEASINESS, NOT TO SAY SHOCK, CONCERNING DEGREE TO WHICH FINLAND APPEARED TO HAVE SUCCEDED TO SOVIET PRESSURE AND INFLUENCE. BRUNNER SAID AT THAT TIME THAT ALTHOUGH PRIOR TO MPT SWISS HAD PRACTICALLY COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO FINNS TO SUPPORT HELSINKI AS CSCE SITE, THEY NOW CONSIDERED IT PREFERABLE TO HOLD AT LEAST SOME STAGES OF CONFERENCE ELSEWHERE. BACK IN DECEMBER SWISS THEREFORE WANTED TO KEEP VIENNA OPEN FOR CSCE AND FOR THIS REASON WERE WILLING, ALTHOUGH NOT ENTHUSIASTIC, TO HOST MBFR. WE NOTE WITH INTEREST THAT BRUNNER NOW TAKES POSITION THE "UNDER NO REPEAT NO CONDITIONS WOULD SWISS BE WILLING TO SERVE AS HOST MBFR DISCUSSIONS." SHIFT IN SWISS POSITION MAY BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART ALSO TO APPARENT LACK OF PROGRESS SO FAR IN MBFR/ MPT.

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